

Message Text

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ACTION PRS-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 SS-15 SSO-00 NSC-05
NSCE-00 PA-02 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 INRE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 L-03 H-02 SSM-05 /070 W
-----050885 091444Z /45

O 091300Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9232

USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 JIDDA 5553

JERUSALEM FOR SECRETARY PARTY

STATE FOR S/PRS: DEPT PASS NSC FOR DR BRZEZINSKI AND

WHITE HOUSE FOR POWELL:

USIA FOR IOP/M, ICP, IBS, INA

ROME FOR VOA

BEIRUT FOR VOA

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS A)

SUBJECT: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM THE PRESS

STATEMENT SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS VANCE UPON DEPARTURE
FROM TAIF, SAUDI ARABIA, AUGUST 9, 1977, FOLLOWED BY
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

BEGIN: "I WANT TO THANK HIS MAJESTY KING HALID,

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PRINCE FAHD, HRH THE FOREIGN MINISTER, FOR THEIR
GENEROUS HOSPITALITY TO ME AND MY COLLEAGUES
DURING OUR STAY IN TAIF. WE BENEFITED GREATLY FROM THEIR
WISE INSIGHT INTO THE DIFFICULT PROBLEM OF A MIDDLE EAST
SETTLEMENT. AS PRINCE SAUD INDICATED TO YOU, WE HAVE DISCUSSED
AT LENGTH BOTH SUBSTANTIVE AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS
RELATING TO A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT. AS AS RESULT OF

THESE DISCUSSIONS I FEEL THAT WE HAVE MADE PROGRESS.
I CONVEYED TO HIS MAJESTY AND THEIR ROYAL HIGHNESSES
PRESIDENT CARTER'S UNDIMINISHED COMMITMENT TO SEARCH
FOR A JUST AND LASTING PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AND
WE SHALL WORK TOGETHER IN A COOPERATIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE
FASHION WITH OUR SAUDI ARABIAN COLLEAGUES AND THE OTHER
PARTIES TO ACHIEVE THIS END. I MIGHT SAY THAT I BELIEVE
THAT THE NATURE OF OUR DISCUSSION WAS BOTH EXCELLENT
AND EXTREMELY CONSTRUCTIVE, AND I AM MOST APPRECIATIVE
OF THE TIME THAT WAS GIVEN TO US BY HIS MAJESTY AND BY
THE CROWN PRINCE, SO AS TO ENABLE US TO DEVOTE THE
NECESSARY EFFORT TO PROBING DEEPLY THESE FUNDAMENTAL
QUESTIONS.

Q-- MR SECRETARY, IS THE UNITED STATES IN CONTACT WITH
THE PLO?

A-- WE HAVE NO DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE PLO. WE
ARE INFORMED BY THE VARIOUS ARAB PARTIES AS TO THE
POSITIONS OF THE PLO AND HAVE BEEN SO INFORMED AS
WE HAVE PROCEEDED THROUGH MY VISIT.

Q-- MR SECRETARY, DO YOU HAVE INDIRECT CONTACT?
IS THE UNITED STATES ASKING, FOR EXAMPLE, SAUDI
ARABIA TO COMMUNICATE MESSAGES EITHER IN REQUEST OF
SUBSTANCE OR CLARIFICATION DIRECTLY TO THE PLO?

A-- WE HAVE HAD INDIRECT CONTACT.

Q-- MR SECRETARY, WOULD THE UNITED STATES BE WILLING,
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IN EXCHANGE FOR PALESTINIAN RECOGNITION OF RESOLUTION
242, TO GUARANTEE OR AT LEAST TO ASSURE WHAT IS
COMMONLY CALLED PALESTINIAN NATIONAL RIGHTS?

A-- IT IS PRE-MATURE TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION. WE'LL
WAIT AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS.

Q-- ADDRESSED TO PRINCE SAUD: HAVE YOU ENCOURAGED THE
PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION TO CHANGE ITS
COVENANT, OR TO ACCEPT 242 AND TO GIVE UP ITS DECLARED FOAL

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9233

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AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 JIDDA 5553

JERUSALEM FOR SECRETARY PARTY

STATE FOR S/PRS: DEPT PASS NSC FOR DR BRZEZINSKI AND

WHITE HOUSE FOR POWELL:

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ROME FOR VOA

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OF DESTROYING AND DISMANTLING THE JEWISH STATE?

A-- PRINCE SAUD: WE HAVE NOT TRIED TO CHANGE ANY

OF THE POSITIONS OF PALESTINIAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT.

WHAT WE THINK IS IMPORTANT AT THIS MOMENT IS THAT

THERE BE CONTACTS, AND THIS IS SHARED BY ALL THE

ARAB COUNTRIES--THAT THERE BE CONTACTS BETWEEN THE

UNITED STATES AND THE PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ORGANIZATION.

WE THINK THAT THESE CONTACTS ARE ESSENTIAL

BECAUSE THE UNITED STATES IS ACTING AS AN

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HONEST BROKER, AND SINCE THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM

IS AT THE CORE OF THE ISSUE, THAT THERE MUST BE SUCH

CONTACTS. THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO CAN TALK FOR THE

PALESTINIANS ARE THE PALESTINIANS THEMSELVES.

Q-- YOUR MAJESTY, HOW DO YOU EXPECT TO SEE THOSE

US-PLO CONTACTS COMING ABOUT?

A-- PRINCE SAUD: BY DIRECT CONTACTS...

Q-- YES, BUT I WAS REFERRING TO THE US COMMITMENT NOT

TO TALK DIRECTLY TO THE PLO, MADE IN THE SINAI TWO

AGREEMENT.

A--PRINCE SAUD: AS TO HOW THESE TALKS CAN BE

INITIATED, OR AS TO THE MECHANICS, THAT IS COMETHING

WE'LL HAVE TO SEE...

Q-- MR SECRETARY, COULD YOU AMPLIFY ON YOUR REPLY, SIR, ABOUT THE UNITED STATES HAVING INDIRECT CONTACTS WITH THE PLO? OF WHAT NATURE AND HOW EXTENSIVE?

A-- WE HAVE HEARD VIEWS EXPRESSED WITH RESPECT TO THE PLO THROUGH THE VARIOUS ARAB PARTIES, AND WE HAVE ASKED QUESTIONS OF ALL THE ARAB PARTIES AS TO WHAT IS MEANT BY SOME OF THE THINGS WHICH HAVE BEEN REPORTED.

Q-- MR SECRETARY, COULD YOU TELL US WHAT YOUR UNDERSTANDING IS NOW OF WHAT THE PLO WOULD BE WILLING TO DO IN TERMS OF THEIR ACCEPTING 242 OR ASKING FOR A MODIFICATION?

A-- I THINK THE PLO HAD BETTER SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES.

Q-- MR SECRETARY, HAVE YOU HEARD ANY THING DURING YOUR VISIT HERE THAT MIGHT MAKE YOU OPTIMISTIC, OR MORE OPTIMISTIC, THAT THE PLO MIGHT BE CONSIDERING A CHANGE IN ITS POSITION ON 242?

A-- I HAVE HEARD SOME RUMORS THAT THEY MAY BE CONSIDERING SUCH A CHANGE, BUT I HAVE SEEN NOTHING CONCRETE.

Q-- MR SECRETARY, IS THE UNITED STATES MOVING UNCLASSIFIED

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AWAY FROM ITS COMMITMENT NOT TO DEAL WITH THE PLO UNTIL THEY RECOGNIZE 242, AND AS YOU SAID LAST FEBRUARY, IN JERUSALEM, REVISE THE CHARTER WHICH CALLS FOR ISRAEL'S DESTRUCTION; HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR MIND ABOUT THE DOUBLE COMMITMENT?

A-- WELL, ACTUALLY, THE DOUBLE COMMITMENT IS CONTAINED IN 242 ITSELF, BECAUSE IF ONE ACCEPTS 242, 242 PROVIDES FOR THE FACT THAT EACH STATE IN THE MIDDLE EAST SHALL LIVE IN PEACE AND WITHIN SECURE AND RECOGNIZED BOUNDARIES.

Q-- WELL, HOW CAN THE UNITED STATES ENTER, PRESUMING THEY (PLO) ADOPT 242-- HOW CAN THE UNITED STATES ENTER INTO NEGOTIATION WITH A PARTY WHICH HAS SWORN TO DESTROY ANOTHER COUNTRY, WHICH THE COVENANT DOES?

A-- IF THE PLO WERE TO ACCEPT 242, THEY WOULD BE ACCEPTING THE PRINCIPLE THAT THEY RECOGNIZE THE RIGHT OF ISRAEL TO EXIST IN A STATE OF PEACE WITHIN SECURE AND RECOGNIZED BOUNDARIES WHICH, IN MY JUDGEMENT, WOULD REVOKE THE COVENANT.

Q-- HAS THE PLO, MR SECRETARY, SEND YOU SUCH AND ASSURANCE, OR IS THAT YOUR INTERPRETATION OF SUCH AN ACTION?

A-- I HAVE NOT RECEIVED ANY SUCH ASSURANCES.

Q-- THANK YOU MR SECRETARY.
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